



## **PG&E Land Conservation Commitment Stewardship Council**

**April 2004**

On Dec. 18, 2003, the California Public Utilities Commission (PUC) approved a bankruptcy settlement agreement for Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) that provides environmental benefits and ensures the conservation of lands that are important to maintaining the quality of life of local communities and all Californians in many ways.

Under the settlement, PG&E will protect approximately 140,000 acres of its watershed lands associated with its hydroelectric system, plus its 655-acre Carizzo Plains in San Luis Obispo County, a total estimated land value of \$300 million. These lands will be conserved for a broad range of public benefits, including the protection of the natural habitat of fish, wildlife and plants, the preservation of open space, outdoor recreation by the general public, sustainable forestry, agricultural uses, and historic values.

To ensure that PG&E complies with the settlement's requirement to donate lands or grant conservation easements, the non-profit Pacific Forest and Watershed Lands Stewardship Council (Stewardship Council) has been established.

### **Stewardship Council Role**

Among its duties, the Stewardship Council will:

- Undertake a systematic survey to identify the existing public values of PG&E's Watershed Lands;
- Develop management objectives;
- Plan the desired future of the lands;

- Recommend whether PG&E donate a conservation easement, or fee title, for each parcel of land to best meet conservation efforts and goals; and
- Engage if appropriate and with PUC approval, in land exchange, where land held by PG&E is exchanged for another parcel of land with greater public value.

Reports will be made to the PUC on the status of the conservation easement and land disposition plan. Any proposed disposition will be presented to the PUC for public notice, hearing, and approval.

### **Stewardship Council Governing Board**

The Stewardship Council governing board will consist of representatives from the PUC and a wide range of interested groups. Appointed to the board as of April 2, 2004:

- Luis Arteaga, Executive Director, Latino Issues Forum Public Policy Institute
- The Honorable Hannah-Beth Jackson, Assemblymember, Thirty-fifth District, Chair-Natural Resources Committee
- Dr. J. Alfred Smith, Jr., Senior Pastor, Antioch Baptist Church
- Geoffrey F. Brown, PUC Commissioner (alternate: Bill Ahern PUC Executive Director)
- Robert Kinosian, Office of Ratepayer Advocates (alternate: Truman Burns, Office of Ratepayer Advocates)
- Randy S. Livingston, Lead Director, PG&E (alternate: Mike Schonherr, Project Manager, PG&E)
- L. Ryan Broddrick, Director, California Department of Fish and Game (alternate: Ron Rempel, Deputy Director, California Department of Fish and Game, Habitat Conservation Division)
- Robert Schneider, Chair, Regional Water Quality Control Board (alternate: James C. Pedri, Assistant Executive Officer, Regional Water Quality Control Board)
- Kathy Mannion, Director of Water and Power, Regional Council of Rural Counties
- Art Bagget, Jr., Chair, State Water Resources Control Board (alternate: Jim Canaday, State Water Resources Control Board, Division of Water Rights)
- Karen Mills, California Farm Bureau
- Steve Wald, California Hydro Reform Coalition (alternate: Richard Roos-Collins, National Heritage Institute)
- David Sutton, Director, Trust for Public Land
- Mark Rentz, Vice President, California Forestry Association
- Chris Nota, United States Department of Agriculture Forest Service (alternate: Duane Marti, Bureau of Land Management)

Board decisions will be made by consensus and its meetings will be open to the public.

## **Urban Needs**

A majority of PG&E's ratepayers live in urban areas, not in the Sierra foothills, where the vast majority of the 140,000 acres are located. In order to ensure that substantial environmental benefits are realized by PG&E's urban ratepayers, additional funding will provide a wilderness experience for urban youth, especially disadvantaged urban youth, and to acquire and maintain urban parks and recreation areas. This program will allow disadvantaged, inner city youth to experience the environment in nature's own setting. The program will select young citizens in an urban setting and provide the means to visit these Watershed Lands. While there, they will be exposed to living in the outdoors and see how the actions of man interact with animal and plant life.

## **Stewardship Council Plan Funding**

The Stewardship Council is funded with \$70 million through PG&E rates over 10 years. This funding covers both administrative expenses and environmental enhancements to the protected lands. The planning process, including surveys and inspections of 140,000 acres, will likely cost \$20 million or less, and the balance of the \$70 million will be available to implement physical measures, such as:

- Planting of trees to enhance fish and wildlife habitat and water quality;
- Construction or improvement of recreational access;
- Protection of Tribal or other historical sites; and
- Trail construction or improvements that better link PG&E's lands with neighboring public lands.

In addition, \$30 million for urban needs will be expended in equal installments over 10 years. Approximately one-third will be used to provide seed money that will establish a permanent program for young people who are least likely to enjoy the wonder of California's natural beauty. The two-thirds balance of the \$30 million will be used to acquire urban parks and recreation areas for inner city youth.